

IRONWOOD FOREST NATIONAL MONUMENT
INFORMATION MEETING
JUNE 21, 2001
PINAL AIR PARK, MARANA

AGENDA

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| 6 p.m. | Call to Order - Tony Herrell, Assistant Field Manager |
| 6:05 | Welcome and Introductions - Dave McIlnay, Acting Field Manager |
| 6:15 - 6:45 | Briefing on the IFNM preliminary plan, schedule and time frame - Dan Moore |
| 6:45 - 7 | Update on recreation issues, road inventory, information pamphlet, cadastral survey update - Francisco Mendoza |
| 7 - 7:30 | Update on mining issues - Harlow Jones and Jennott mines - Bill Auby |
| BREAK | |
| 7:45 - 8:10 | Presentation on bighorn sheep habitat within IFNM - Kirby Bristow, AZ Game and Fish |
| 8:10 - 8:30 | Presentation on boundary issue – Bob Quick, ASARCO |
| 8:30 - 9 | Wrap up, questions and answers |

Approximately 90 individuals attended a public information meeting about the Ironwood Forest National Monument, on June 21, 2001, at Pinal Air Park near Marana.

Tony Herrell of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) introduced the themes of patience, building mutual respect, and looking at the management plan from the big picture, to initiate the collaborative planning process.

Dan Moore–BLM Hydrologist–followed the introduction with a presentation on the Ironwood Forest National Monument preplan as the BLM instruction book for the planning process. Moore identified the issues of: preserving natural and cultural resources, land tenure, minerals, realty, grazing, multiple agency management, recreation, urban interface, transportation, ground facilities, data collection, and a tentative schedule for the planning process.

Concerns regarding undocumented immigrants, the federal register notice, and threatened and endangered species were addressed by Moore, and will be discussed further throughout the planning process. Richard Oxford, Director of Operations Division, State Land Department, addressed Arizona State Trust Land incorporation within the Monument.

The preplan is available to the public at www.az.blm.gov/tfo/index.htm.

Francisco Mendoza–BLM Recreation Specialist– then presented an update on recreation issues in the Monument, and elaborated on resource inventories. Mendoza discussed the need for public access and identification of public access and recreational routes, including hiking, biking, OHVs, etc. The BLM is looking into a cooperative agreement with the University of Arizona and Arizona State Trust Lands for a joint inventory system.

Concerns regarding the time frame for the inventory, road selection, and the bridge at I-10 and Silverbell were addressed. During the latter part of July, inventory crews will take two to three weeks to complete the initial sweep of driveable roads. Route selection will be made through the collaborative planning process. Pinal county is planning to pave more of the Silverbell bridge in September.

Bill Auby–BLM Geologist–followed with information regarding two mine reclamation projects within the Monument. JENOTT Mine off of Silverbell is a rock quarry from a mineral sale. To date a dozer needs to slope the pit for stability, and the five acres need to be reseeded. According to Monument regulations there will no further mineral sales. The Harlow Jones site is a mill site that has recently been reclaimed and reseeded. BLM will be signing to keep visitors off until vegetation regrows.

Concerns regarding the reuse of the JENOTT site, volunteer use, patented mining claims, and a future process for future claim site determination were addressed. Use of the mine site will be discussed during the collaborative planning process, as will the use of volunteers and future claims on the Monument. There are approximately 4600 acres of mining claims within the Monument boundaries.

Kirby Bristow from Arizona Game and Fish gave a presentation on the effects of the inactive ASARCO mining operations on the bighorn sheep population as of 1993. The study area consisted of Silverbell Peak, West Silverbell Peak and Ragged Top Peak. Ewes utilized the mining pits for lambing, and rams foraged lower ground during the off-breeding season. The population is steady, according to helicopter surveys of the previous 15 years. The biggest concern regarding the population is the disturbance of the social activities of rams while living on the lower areas, which is used to create a breeding hierarchy.

Bristow addressed concerns regarding poaching, ram movement in relation to increased mine activity, isolation of the population, cost and duration of the study and human disturbances. Sheep around the mine were more accustomed to human disturbance, though their heart rates increased. Lambs are also more prone to disease if they are exposed to human activity.

Bob Quick from ASARCO followed with a presentation on the issues faced by the mine, which shares a boundary with the Monument, and its preferred solution, which is a change in boundary that would revert 400 acres to BLM management. ASARCO has a road and a pipeline created in the early 1990s and overburden stored since the 1960s. Quick also mentioned the potential for a land exchange, whereby the company would acquire the 400 acres. He stated safety and ease of management as the basis for his request. Quick cited a change in interpretation of mining claim uses by Solicitor Leshy in 2001 as the underlying reason this change in management strategy was needed.

Quick addressed concerns including placement of the facilities, a second bighorn sheep study, including the study process, the inclusion of on the ground information from local residents, and University of Arizona consultation, as well as fencing, the necessity for a change in land ownership, future uses of the land if it becomes privately owned, the precedent changing land

ownership would create, what lands could be exchanged, hiker safety, and the likelihood of recreational use.

The meeting concluded with an open question and answer forum.

For more information regarding this or upcoming meetings, the Ironwood Forest National Monument, or how to become involved in the collaborative planning process, please contact Public Affairs Specialist Lorraine Buck at (520) 258-7240, or visit the BLM website at www.az.blm.gov